1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

821 "Kengelekezeeeee!" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child: both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying: "This is your moon!" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo): then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him: You have not been shown your moon! (1)

852 846 854 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla: 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

884 But in the Northern clans a characteristic rite has been preserved, or borrowed from the Sutho-Pedis, who attach great importance to it. It is called *khomba*, or *yisa matin*, to lead to the water, and is performed in the following manner. The girl, when she thinks that the time of nubility is near, chooses an adoptive mother, possibly in a neighbouring village. She works for her, and helps her in gathering her fuel. When the day has come, she runs away from her village and goes to this adoptive mother "to weep near her" (a rilela ka yena). These are distinct separation rites. She says : "Ndji khombile" — "I am of age." Then will begin a *seclusion period* of one month. Three or four girls receive the initiation together. They are shut up in a hut, and when they come out, must always wear over their face a veil consisting of a very dirty and greasy cloth. Every morning they are led to the pool, and their whole body is immersed in the water as far as the neck. Other initiated girls or women accompany them singing obscene songs, and drive away with sticks any man who happens to be on the road, as no man is allowed to see a girl during this period. If a man happens to come near the group, the women ask him the secret formulae of the circumcision school, not the long ones but the short ones, probably those which contain licentious words. Should he be unable to answer, they beat him. It is said that a man who sees a girl during this month becomes blind! When the cortege of women accompanying the initiated has returned home, the nubile girls are imprisoned in the hut. They are teased, pinched, scratched by the adoptive mothers or by other women ; they must also listen to the licentious songs which are sung to them. Though they are trembling from cold, being still wet, they are not allowed to come near the fire. They are also instructed in sexual matters, and told that they must never reveal anything about the blood of the menses to a man. They are also exhorted to be very polite to every grown up person, and must salute everybody entering the hut, even those passing before the door, by clapping their hands. Sometimes the wind moves some dead leaves ; they mistake this noise for the sound of steps and salute reverently!

881 841

881 At the end of the month the adoptive mother brings the girl

841 Let us consider first how conjugal relations are regulated in normal circumstances.

Every month during her "tihweti" the woman is taboo and no intercourse is allowed. This is one of the severest taboos. Should a husband infringe this law, his health would fail, and, should he be called to go to war, "his knees would shake," he would tremble and be unable to fight (1). As regards the woman, these days constitute a real marginal period during which she is absolutely secluded from her husband. She must keep to the left half of the hut and not trepass across the centre line. If she wants snuff, she is not allowed to go to her husband in the part in which he lies; she must send a child to fetch the tobacco she wants! During these days she sleeps on a special mat and puts on special clothes, the old ones which she brought with her for this purpose on the day she first came to the conjugal dwelling. When cooking, she must not touch the mealie meal with her hands, but with a spoon. A rich man who has plenty of spouses, and therefore plenty of food, will not touch the pot of the tabooed wife! At the end of the period, she smears the floor of the hut and puts on her ordinary clothing. (Annotatio 12)[1]. This is evidently the aggregation rite by which the woman returns to everyday life.

843 754 Normal relations continue during the first year of married life. Should the wife become pregnant, they are not suspended. It would even seem that they are rather recommended, as is shown by the following story: A young man once complained to me that he had been bewitched by his maternal aunt. The result of the spell she had cast over him was that he was no longer able to have sexual intercourse with his wife; and he was very angry, as he asserted that the aim of his aunt, in doing this, had been to prevent the successful issue of the pregnancy. She wanted

(1) The woman during her tihweti is also taboo for other persons. I heard of the case of a child who suffered from a hernia in the scrotum five days after birth. People said that it was the fault of certain women who had taken it in their arms during menstruation.

1 [See p. 618 in these categories or in 116—Analyst]

we shall discuss it in Part VI the
843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[1] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
753 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *ñwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in 116-Analyse]

247 (L.), with its white or pink blossoms, which have spread all over
331 the coast.

Having now finished our first general inspection, let us add some details about the huts and the open places in the village.

342 The hut, the construction of which we shall describe later on,
784 (Part IV) has an opening (nyangwa) of variable dimensions closed by a door. In some parts of the Gaza country it is so small that one must positively crawl to enter it. Everywhere one must at any rate stoop low (korama). As regards the *threshhold* (ntjandja wa shipfalo), it is not taboo to step over it. The headman's threshhold however is dreaded because it was treated with medicines when the hut was built, so it is taboo to sit on it ; these powerful medicines might do harm and
342 even cause death. In the middle of the black clay floor is a
354 kind of raised circle, in the centre of which fire is occasionally lighted in winter on account of the cold. It is the interior *shitiko*. Cooking may be done here if it rains ; glowing embers sometimes remain on it during the night and numberless babies have been burnt to death by falling into the fire while their mothers were
513 sleeping. On the left, on entering, is the sleeping place (shilawo)
853 of the wife, on the right that of the husband. They both however
841 generally spread their mats on the right and sleep beside each other. It is only during the tabooed periods (menses, nursing), that the husband must keep to his own particular side (p. 188).

353 The back of the hut is generally occupied by the big basket (ngula) in which clothing and seeds are kept. This spot is called *mfungwe*. In the roof *(lwangu)* are fixed or suspended various articles : ears of sorghum or millet, cobs to be used as seed at the next sowing, assagais, sticks and knobkerries etc., and against the walls one frequently observes rough drawings made with white clay, or, in the vicinity of towns, chromos of Queen Victoria, Edward VII, or Don Carlos, as the case may be!

361 The hubo and the bandla differ from each other. *Bandla* is
351 a Zulu word which has supplanted the Ronga term *shisiso*, viz.,
562 "the place where one finds shelter from the wind." Men light a small fire there to warm themselves. They also eat together

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causà alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

765
835 way that all the men can see her pudenda which is
831 much tabooed (that is, sinful)."]
834 "Annotatio undecima (P. 161). Hic, mulier paulo dilutiore
765 colore magnaque statura addit: 'Hi kundjana, id est:
792 coeamus!' "

[Note 11 (page 161). Here a woman with a slightly lighter color and of large stature, adds: Hi kundjana, that is, "let us have intercourse!"]

841 "Annotatio duodecima (P. 187). Hæc sunt ipsissima verba, quibus Makhelu mulieris menstruansis taboo (id est nefas) describit. Mulier menstruans est res, quæ imprimis 'yila' est. Per sex dies 'yila,' id est, nefas est. Septimo die transit flumen ad se lavandam. Octavo ei nondum licet cum marito suo coire; forte enim sanguis pudendis ad hæret, eà insciente. Magis 'refrigescit.' (Verbo phula menstruans mulier comparatur cum aula a foco remota).

Si, ante id tempus, maritus cum uxore cœat, ægrotus fiat, veretrum retro ita recedat ut vir urinam reddere non possit et, brevi tempore, moriatur. Talem vitæ exitum multi habuerunt. Radicibus arboris cui nomen est mayilana vel mulieris menstruantis vestis particulà, a medico ad levem pulverem redactà, quæ ægro bibenda est, morbus sanari potest. Aegrotus multum sanguinis reddet, et veretro exeunte, salvus est."

[Note 12 (page 187). These are the very words with which Makhelu [sic] describes the taboo (that is, the sin) of the menstruating woman. A menstruating woman is something which is, first of all, yila. For six days she is yila, that is to say, taboo. On the seventh day, the flow that cleanses her passes over. On the eighth day she is not yet allowed to have intercourse with her husband; for perhaps some blood is still sticking to her pudenda without her knowledge. She "cools down" even more so. (By the word phula the menstruating woman is compared to the pot removed from the stove.)

841 If the husband should have sexual intercourse with his wife
834 before this time, he will be taken sick, his private parts will
756 decay to such an extent that the man would no longer be able to pass urine and would die within a brief period of time. Many have had such an end to their life. The sick man can be cured by a liquid containing the roots of the tree that is called mayilana or by a particle of the menstruating woman's dress, reduced to a light powder by the medicine man. The sick man loses a lot of blood; after his penis is able to pass water again, the man is well again.

843 her own pudenda with a much befouled intimate garment which
834 she afterwards burns.
841 Going to the fire they both warm their head and their hands. Then the woman mixes the ashes she has collected with fat and smears it over her husband's limbs, rubbing along his fingers, his arms, and his legs, which is called lula. Afterwards, in the two nights following, they will have intercourse. If the husband has had sexual intercourse not with his wife but with some girl from another village from lustful desire he will be given a fossorium so that the rite lula will come to its completion.]

765 "Annotatio octava (P. 155). Si mulieris parentes procul
783 habitant, maritus eius comes itineris erit, quacum superiore
833 nocte coibit, ad aquæ lustrali vim novam dandam."
505 [Note 8 (page 155). If the woman's parents live far away, her husband will be her companion on the way and he will have sexual intercourse with her the night before in order to give the lustral water new power.]

765 "Annotatio nona (P. 160). Faciebat dum 'Khunye khunye';
535 quibus verbis significatur coitus (khunyeta)."
831 [Note 9 (page 160). She was saying Khunye, khunye during
834 this time; these words signify coitus (khunyeta).

"Annotatio decima (P. 160). Carminum, morum temporis marginalis natura eo obscenior est quo nobilior defunctus fuit. Viguetus narrat: [518] 'Duce vel uno ex principibus mortuo, luctuque consueto præterito, luctum privatum, ad quem boves immolentur, celebrari. Carnem ad baculos humi fixos alligari; homines inde mulierem vocare, eamque posteriorem vestem exuere juberi, neque ullam vestem nisi anteriorem habere quam, si velit, exuere ei liceat. Eam, postea, divaricaturam esse ad unam ex carnis particulis dentibus apprehendendam ita prominentem ut omnes viri eius pudenda videant, quod plerumque 'taboo' (id est nefas) sit.'"

[Note 10 (page 160). The nature of the songs, a custom of the marginal period, is the more obscene the greater the nobility of the deceased person was. Viguet relates: [518] "When the leader or one of the chiefs is dead and the usual mourning has passed, they stage a private mourning at which bulls are sacrificed. They tie the flesh to poles fixed in the ground; then the men call a woman and order her to take off the clothes on her back and they do not allow her to have any clothes on except the one in front which, if she wants to, she may also take off. Then she must seize one of the bits of meat with her teeth, bending forward in such a

of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass. 231

The Thongas castrate most of their bulls ; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame ; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, the boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their foreheads to irritate them. They give them names ; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on his head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the "stripes of heaven," — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Sutho for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thongas as is the case amongst Zulus or Suthos. 231 552

Women, especially those of childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls whose menses have not yet begun or who are at any rate unmarried, to fetch it from the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls, who must sometimes stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen (I. p. 184) and seen that these prohibitions are based on the idea that the menstrual blood is as dangerous for oxen as for 231 562 841 784

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed : a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

231 men having relations with women during menstruation (I. p. 187).
562 Should a drop of it fall in the cattle kraal, this would endanger the
841 health of the whole herd. Women are even prohibited from
784 passing through a herd of oxen ; they must go round it, because otherwise the death of the calves would ensue. Amongst the Ba-Ngoni this taboo is so strong that a woman guilty of having transgressed against it was put to death (1).

231 The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition
262 of *wealth* ; oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing
556 girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 329). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wishes to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives and travellers, are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

234 As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the food of villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well-filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its

241 (1) We meet here with an interesting instance of a superstition having no scientific
462 basis whatever, which is nevertheless productive of good results. Women must keep apart from oxen. Since the plough was introduced amongst South African Natives, they have been quick to notice that it is a very useful instrument, and have adopted it in many places. The plough has to be drawn by oxen and men alone are allowed to drive them. Thus women are relieved of the heavy work of tilling the fields which had been allotted to them by immemorial custom. It is probable that further knowledge will free the Natives from their old fear and from the taboo which resulted from it ; yet the idea that everything connected with oxen belongs to the domain of man will remain and thus real social progress will have been obtained through an absurd superstition !

nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally taken in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork : a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet set, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decompose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part, which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 52).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen off. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children, as they do not count! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell!

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not touch it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 62). Practically every one possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.